

THE
Life of Faith

Exemplify'd and Recommended,

IN A

LETTER,

Found in the Study of the

Revd. Mr JOSEPH BELCHER,

Late of Dedham in New-England,

Since his Decease.

Being an ANSWER to that QUESTION,

*How to Live in this World, so as to Live
in Heaven?*

To which are added, A few VERSES by the

Late Revd. Mr KILLINGHALL,

Upon Reading of it.

Heb. xi. 4. *By it, he being dead, yet speaketh.*

S A L E T I N K :

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MDCCLXXIII.

THE Life of Faith, &c.

DEAR BROTHER,

Y^{OUR}s I received, and thought on that Question, being, *How to live in this World, so as to live in Heaven?* It is one of the common pleas of my heart, which have often occasioned to stir, and therefore takes me not unprovided.

It is hard to keep the helm up against so many soft-winds as we meet withal upon this sea of fire and glass. That Man knoweth not his own heart, that finds it not difficult to break through the entanglements of the World; creature-smiles stop and entice away the affections from Jesus Christ; creature-frowns encompass and tempestuate the Spirit, that it thinks it doth well to be angry. Both ways Grace is a loser. We have all need to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. The greatest of your conflicts and causes of complaints seem to have their original here: Temptations follow Tempers. As there are two predominant qualities in the Temper of every Body, so there are two

pre-

predominant Sins in the Temper of every Heart. Pride is one in all Men in the World.

I will tell you familiarly what God hath done for my Soul; and in what trade my Soul keeps toward himself.

I am come to a conclusion to look after no great matters in the World, but to know Christ and him crucified. I make best way in a low gale, A high spirit and a high sail together will be dangerous, and therefore I prepare to live low. I desire not much; I pray against it: My study is my calling; so much as to tend that without distraction, I am bound to plead for, and more I desire not. By my secluded retirements, I have the advantage to observe how every day's occasions insensibly wear off the heart from God, and bury it in itself, which they who live in care and slumber cannot be sensible of. I have come to see a need of every thing God gives me, and to want nothing that he denies me. There is no dispensation, tho' afflictive, but either in it, or after it, I find I could not be without it; whether it be taken from me, or not given to me, sooner or latter God quiets me in himself without it. I cast all my concerns on the Lord, and live securely on the care and wisdom of my heavenly Father.

My ways, you know, are, in some sense, hedged up with thorns, and grow darker and darker daily: But yet I distrust not my God in the least, and live more quietly in the absence

sence of all by Faith, than I should do, (I am persuaded,) if I possessed them.

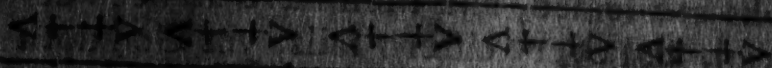
I think the Lord deals kindly with me, to make me believe for all my mercies, before I have them; they will then be Isaacs, sons of laughter. The less Reason hath to work upon, the more freely Faith casts itself on the faithfulness of God. I find that whilst Faith is steady, nothing can disquiet me; and when Faith totters, nothing can establish me. If I tumble out amongst means and creatures, I am presently lost, and can come to no end; but, if I stay myself on God, and leave him to work in his own way and time, I am at rest, and can sit down and sleep in a Promise, when a thousand rise up against me: Therefore, my way is not to cast before-hand, but to work with God by the day; *Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.* I find so much to do continually with my calling, and my heart, that I have no time to puzzle myself with peradventures and futurities.

As for the state of the times, they are very gloomy and tempestuous: But, *Why do the Heathen rage?* Faith lies at Anchor in the midst of the Waves, and believes the accomplishment of the Promise through all those overturnings, confusions, and seeming impossibilities. Upon this God do I live, who is our God for ever, and will guide us to the death. Methinks I live becalm'd in his bosom, as Luther, in such a case. I am not much concerned, let Christ see to it.

I know prophecies are now dark, and the books are sealed, and Men have all been deceived, and every cistern fails, yet God doth continue faithful; and *faithful is he that promised, who will do it.* I believe these dark times are the womb of a bright morning. Many things more I might have said, but enough for the present.

Oh! Brother, keep close to God, and then you need fear nothing. Maintain secret and intimate communion with God, and then a little of the creature will go a great way. Take time for private duties; crowd not religion into a corner of the day. There is a Dutch Proverb, *Nothing is got by Thieving, nor lost by Praying.* Lay up all your good in God, so as to over-balance the sweetness and bitterness of all creatures. Spend no time anxiously in fore-hand contrivances for this World, they never succeed; God will run his dispensations another way: Self-contrivances are the effects of unbelief, I can speak by experience. Would Men spend those hours they run in plots and devices, in communion with God, and leave all on him by venturesome believing, they would have more peace and comfort.

I leave you with your God and mine. The Lord Jesus be with your Spirit. Pray for your own Soul, pray for Jerusalem, and pray hard for your poor Brother. *Amen.*



A FEW

V E R S E S,

By the Late Reverend

Mr KILLINGHALL,

Upon Reading the Foregoing LETTER.



I.

IN all my troubles, sharp and strong,
 My Soul to Jesus flies;
 My anchor-hold is firm in him,
 When swelling billows rise.

II.

His comforts bear my spirits up;
 I trust a faithful God;
 The sure foundation of my hope
 Is in a Saviour's Blood.

III.

Loud Hallelujahs sing, my Soul,
 To thy Redeemer's name!
 In joy and sorrow, life and death,
 His love is still the same.

A few VERSES in Addition to the foregoing,

By ALEX^r. LUMISDEN.

I SEE Christ's bleeding side ;
Lord, hide me in thy wounds :
Thy sheltering such helpless souls,
Unto thy praise redounds.

Into thy arms I fall,
In free-love me embrace ;
In weakness great on thee I call,
O shew thy smiling face.

I wait at thy command,
Until the pool shall move,
When thou wilt send thy healing pow'r,
To cure me in thy love.

Thou know'st my feeble voice,
Which I to thee direct :
Thy Gospel-method is my choice,
All others I reject.

Thou know'st my heart's desire,
My doubts and fears dost see :
Thy sounding bowels cause me hear,
And kindly say to me.

Poor Soul, of little faith,
O wherefore dost thou doubt ?
Whoe'er he be that comes to me,
Him will I not cast out.

(9)
On thy Word I depend,
Thou faithful art, and true;
My weak faith strengthen and defend,
My unbelief subdue.

Teach me to know thy name,
Jesus, and it to bless;
Thy title also to proclaim,
The Lord our Righteousness.

O rebels to my Letter bow,
Your weapons cast away;
Come to me in this day of grace,
And make no more delay.

For, lo, the flaming sword is drawn;
And shak'n o'er your head;
If dying Justice be provok'd,
The blow will strike you dead.

Comply then with my Spirit's work,
Lay your hearts give me room;
In straits you'll still find me a friend,
I'll bring you safely home.

Let worldly clogs all stay behind,
When I to Christ draw nigh;
Let Faith's wings now be stretched out,
And to his wounds I'll fly.

Good shepherds, seek and bring me home,
Then at the Father's side,
Bestore the sinners of thy race,
Let me no more offend.

F I N I S.

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Thou faithful art, and true;
My weak faith strengthen and defend,
My unbelief subdue.

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Good Shepherd, seek and bring me home;
Thou art the Sinner's friend;
Restore the shinings of thy face,
Let me no more offend.

F I N I S.

